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COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 389th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 16 June 1993, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. HOHENFELLNER (Austria)

- Report of the Legal Subcommittee on the work of its thirty-second session (continued)
- Spin-off benefits of space technology: review of current status
- Other matters

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The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

REPORT OF THE LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE WORK OF ITS THIRTY-SECOND SESSION (A/AC.105/544) (continued)

Mr. CAMACHO (Ecuador) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, since this is the first time that my delegation has spoken in the debates in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), I wish to express to you the particular pleasure we have in seeing you presiding over our work once again. Through you, I also wish to congratulate the other members of the Bureau.

With regard to agenda item 6, my delegation believes that during the thirty-second session of the Legal Subcommittee, it was possible to observe a fruitful spirit of cooperation on the part of most delegations, which allowed the resumption of positive dialogue on the various agenda items.

We are firmly convinced of the need for the progressive development of space law with a view to the application of scientific and technological progress for the benefit of all humankind and for the strengthening of international peace and cooperation.

Accordingly, we wish to reiterate our satisfaction at the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 47/68 on the Set of Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space.

With regard to the definition and delimitation of outer space, in our opinion, the document submitted by the Russian Federation has helped to promote a fruitful exchange of ideas. This must continue, as should the consideration of other proposals submitted earlier on this item, with a view to establishing criteria to help to solve the problem of the lack of any delimitation of outer space, a problem that could, in future, become a source of conflict among nations.

(Mr. Camacho, Ecuador)

With regard to the geostationary orbit, in the light of its special characteristics in relation to the Earth's equator and the fact that it is a limited and exhaustible natural resource, my country wishes to reaffirm the view that it is necessary to establish a sui generis legal regime to govern access to and utilization of the orbit and to guarantee the right of all States to its benefits, taking into account the needs of the developing countries and, in particular, of the equatorial countries.

In this connection, my delegation shares the views expressed by the delegation of China on the geostationary orbit and the competence of COPUOS to elaborate the relevant legal regime.

Ecuador welcomed the submission to the Subcommittee of a working paper entitled "Principles regarding international cooperation in the exploration and utilization of outer space for peaceful purposes" (A/AC.105/C.2/L.182/Rev.1) as an interesting and encouraging point of departure for the consideration of this item.

My delegation wishes now to refer to the technical cooperation between my country and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs and to express the profound gratitude of the Government of Ecuador to the Office, to Mr. Adigun Ade Abiodun and to the experts who participated in the technical mission, which, at the request of my country, visited Ecuador, Colombia, Peru and Venezuela from 1 to 6 March as part of a programme of technical assistance on the functioning of the Cotopaxi receiving station. The mission carried out studies and provided recommendations relating to the receiving, storage and processing of satellite data and the possibility of establishing an Andean multinational corporation to ensure continuity of the station's operations and the provision of its services to the countries under its coverage.

(Mr. Camacho, Ecuador)

I also wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the Office for Outer Space Affairs for the excellent report sent to interested countries on the work carried out by the mission.

Mr. KHLUNOV (Russian Federation) (interpretation from Russian): At the outset, Mr. Chairman, I should like through you to express gratitude to Mr. Mikulka, Chairman of the Legal Subcommittee, for the important work he did in that capacity.

My delegation notes with particular satisfaction that at the last session of the Legal Subcommittee, progress was achieved in the consideration of all three substantive agenda items.

I should first like to discuss the Subcommittee's work on the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. We note with satisfaction an especially positive moment in the work of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space: the adoption by the General Assembly of the Set of Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space, as contained in resolution 47/68. At the same time, we feel that the review process on the set of Principles adopted should be started only after careful preparatory work has been done, in particular in the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee.

With regard to agenda item 4, "Matters relating to the definition and delimitation of outer space and to the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit", my delegation notes that during the session of the Subcommittee, a sufficiently useful exchange of reviews took place with regard to the international legal aspects of the use of aerospace objects within certain altitudes. Moreover, the Chairman of the Working Group prepared a draft questionnaire on these objects. My delegation assumes that that draft will help to find a mutually acceptable solution to this difficult problem.

(Mr. Khlunov, Russian Federation)

We would also like to point out that the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in the past has acted successfully enough with regard to various aspects of the rational and equitable use of the geostationary orbit. As we see it, it is necessary to continue to avoid any conflict between the activities of ITU and the work of this Committee.

With regard to agenda item 3, allow me once again to inform members that Russia's involvement in establishing the possibilities for including all interested States in outer space activity, in particular developing countries, and in the development through joint efforts of institutional foundations for mutually profitable international cooperation, will be consistently expanded.

In conclusion, allow me to express the hope that the Office for Outer Space Affairs, which, as it is planned, will be given the task of providing Secretariat services for the Legal Subcommittee and directly handling activities in the area of international space law, will fruitfully cooperate with the Office of Legal Affairs in conducting its growing responsibilities in the legal sphere.

The CHAIRMAN: We have thus concluded our consideration of agenda item 6, "Report of the Legal Subcommittee on the work of its thirty-second session".

SPIN-OFF BENEFITS OF SPACE TECHNOLOGY: REVIEW OF CURRENT STATUS

Ms. YU Nan Nan (China) (interpretation from Chinese): The transfer of space technology to non-space fields is an important question in the peaceful uses of outer space.

With the deepening of economic reform in China, China's aerospace industry is faced with the new situation of a socialist market economy. Under the guidance of our national policy that military-industry technology should

(Ms. Yu Nan Nan, China)

serve our national economy, scientists in the aerospace sector are utilizing space technology for developing non-aerospace products, opening up markets, accumulating capital, and for self-development. After reaching the goals for satellites and rockets assigned to them by the State, they move away from single aerospace products to the production and marketing of various civilian products. Due to their efforts in the past decade or so, not only have they cultivated a primarily stable technical force for the development of products, but they also have built up a new organizational and managerial mechanism. Among all the items produced by the sector, the ratio of civilian products, including non-aerospace products, is growing rapidly. To date, thousands of products have been developed that have brought about distinct economic benefits.

(Ms. Yu Nan Nan, China)

Now, I should like to introduce several successful examples of the utilization of space technology in non-aerospace fields.

The first of these is utilization of land-based satellite facilities and technologies for the development of various surface reception and transmission systems for television and communication. China is a developing country whose communication industry is far from well developed. In recent years the State has attached great importance to the development of the satellite communication industry. In addition to manufacturing and launching communication satellites on its own, China has also purchased or rented satellites and transmission devices from abroad. As space satellites are used for communication purposes, corresponding communication facilities also need to be developed vigorously on Earth. On the basis of existing land-based satellite systems, the relevant departments in our country have developed a series of products for mono-track television reception on waveband C from 3 to 7.5 metres and 0.45-to 20-metre KU-band television antennas, and have built Earth stations for satellite communication and satellite data transmission stations.

Of the products developed and put to use, the RCH-89 television system is able to transmit object imagery beyond 60 to 80 kilometres. With that system being used for telephone transmissions, there is no longer any need physically to set up wire networks across mountains; this is rapidly bringing China's communication industry beyond conventional wire transmission technologies into the ranks of the more advanced.

Aided by communication satellites and surface communication systems, China's broadcasting and television relay operations are being conducted smoothly. At present, China's communication satellites are not only transmitting 30 overseas programmes of the Central People's Broadcasting

(Ms. Yu Nan Nan, China)

Station, CCTV's Programs I and II, two educational television programmes and programmes of the local television station in Tibet, but are also transmitting local programmes in Yunnan, Guizhou and Xingjiang in a time-sharing mode. In addition, over 3,000 educational television stations, relay stations and reception stations have been established. Sixteen million people are watching these educational programmes and 1.2 million primary and middle school teachers have been trained through them. This venture alone has saved the State several hundred million yuan.

To date, China has opened over 1,500 channels for long-distance telephone and telegraph via communication satellites. Medium-sized satellite communication Earth stations currently being built in major cities will enable China to open more than 7,000 international telephone lines. When China's new generation of applications satellites, which are still in the research stage, are put to use, they will have the capacity to transmit simultaneously six channels of colour television programmes and 8,000 duplex telephone lines. This will improve China's communication facilities even further.

Second, superior technology and human talent in the field of satellite and rocket high-precision control have been utilized in the development and production of central industrial controllers for industrial automatic control. In the present flourishing computer market, the sale of the controllers constitutes 15 per cent of the total national sales of similar products. Furthermore, relevant technology in the field has also been applied to projects in automatic monitor control and traffic management used in large-scale projects such as oil fields, seaports, airports, highways, railroads, environmental protection and chemical factories.

Third, automatic control technology and precision machining capabilities have been applied in establishing an industrial robot development

(Ms. Yu Nan Nan, China)

corporation. Robots for welding and paint-spraying have been developed and marketed. The technology for developing robots for tractors has matured and these robots will soon be in production. The development of robots has eased the intensity of labour for workers and has thus improved their working environment.

Four, the aerospace sector's rich resources in terms of computer scientists and equipment have been utilized in the development and production of personal computers and the development of microcomputer application software. As the result of cooperation with the mechanics industry, a microcomputer digital control system was developed and has been applied to various digitally controlled lathes.

Fifth, space radio transmission technology has been applied in the development and production of industrial video systems, charge-coupled-device video transmission systems, and a system for automatic control of electricity payloads. As these products are the result of transfer of space technology, they have distinct advantages such as being small, light and interference-resistant.

Sixth, electronics and optics technologies and precision machining capabilities have been applied in the production of various kinds of medical equipment, such as the successful set-up of a production line for X-ray video equipment. This product enjoys a good reputation in China. Its sales volume accounts for 65 per cent of the market for similar products. Meanwhile, a joint venture has been established with a foreign company to produce medical computer tomography (CT) and nuclear magnetic vibration scanning equipment.

Seventh, vacuum cryogenics technology in the satellite and space environments has been utilized in the development of ion beam etching machines

(Ms. Yu Nan Nan, China)

and vacuum arc painting equipment. Cryogenics technology has also been applied, inter alia, in the exploitation of petroleum.

It is the guiding principle and policy in the development of the Chinese aerospace sector to utilize space technology and transfer experience to non-space fields so as to produce more and better high-tech and other new products to benefit other sectors of our national economy and the people in general, while achieving greater economic benefits for the aerospace sector itself. At present, civilian products, including non-aerospace products that are the results of the transfer of space technology, constitute 70 per cent of the gross industrial output of the aerospace sector.

We hope to exchange experiences with other countries to explore the utilization of space technology for non-space products, so as to make a common contribution to benefit mankind.

Mr. MOUTSOULAS (Greece): Space technology is not just a goal of today's technological development; it is also a tool for further advancement. It has thus led to the creation and promotion of new disciplines.

The development of the Geographical Information Systems (GIS) is a representative example of that fact. GIS were developed to place a vast amount of multi-disciplinary environmental data into a data bank which not only serves as a well-organized means of storage, but also as a tool for inter-disciplinary studies of the environment and for optimum regional planning; it has thus become a powerful tool for planners, managers and decision makers.

This development has been an educational challenge in terms of a revolutionary change in the land information surveying curricula in universities. To act most effectively, several European universities have

(Mr. Moutsoulas, Greece)

joined efforts in a cooperative programme in the framework of the Commission of the European Communities: a European Certificate in Land Information Surveying has been established in the framework of the Erasmus programme of the European Economic Community (EEC), with the participation of institutions from Greece, Belgium, Denmark, France, Spain, Portugal, Ireland and the United Kingdom.

Members are aware of the fundamental principle that scientific education should not be restricted by national boundaries. In the light of that principle, Greece's educational opportunities in the field of remote sensing and GIS are open to students from any country, especially those from developing countries. In addition to arrangements made through the system of bilateral agreements for scientific and technical cooperation, which links Greece with several other countries, and the opportunities offered by the Tempus programme of the EEC, the Government of Greece has allocated two State scholarships for foreign scientists who wish to undertake post-graduate work in Greece in the fields of remote sensing and GIS. It is expected that in the future these activities will be administered by the Centre for Space Science and Technology Education, the establishment of which has already been proposed.

Moreover, the use of satellite data, as an additional input, for the development of models of forest conditions leading to better forest fire risk assessment is another good example of a spin-off of space technology. A study on this subject will be carried out at Delphi, in the facilities of the European Cultural Centre, next November, during the special workshop we are organizing in cooperation with the German Aerospace Research Establishment. My delegation has already reported to the Committee about this.

Mr. SAHADE (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): I do not believe it necessary to emphasize the importance and diversity of the applications of space technology that have been and continue to be of extraordinary value for improving the life of the individual, both physically and, in terms of knowledge, culturally.

Two days ago Mr. Rao, in his inspired and enthusiastic statement, gave us a list of topics that stand out as fitting examples of the results of spectacular progress in space technology. We should add another list that includes progress in such areas as medicine, materials science, knowledge of the universe with the birth of the so-called invisible astronomies, the information we garner through the power to look beyond our atmosphere with new eyes and so on.

We are, no doubt, living in times when progress is closely linked with space science and technology. In this regard, the work carried out by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs is extremely positive and should be supported with all the economic means it needs in order to expand and streamline its functions to the utmost.

That, however, is not enough. That support needs to be supplemented with the creation of awareness, in decision-making circles of the non-industrialized countries, of the importance of scientific and technological development and, hence, space activities in the development of our countries.

We know that the immediate response is that in many cases there are other priorities which, apparently, must take precedence over the needs mentioned. Here we would draw attention to the case of India, whose Government had to decide at a certain point whether to support scientific and technological development or emphasize other priorities. The wise decision taken in India

(Mr. Sahade, Argentina)

at that point has borne fruit. It is edifying to read in this connection the words of Prime Minister Nehru on the opening of the general assembly of the International Astronomical Union in Delhi in 1985.

We are convinced that every effort of the Office for Outer Space Affairs should be accompanied by an effort to create the above-mentioned awareness among those who hold decision-making authority in Governments, and this effort should be made even in the General Assembly. As a result, the international cooperation we have been advocating would be simpler and more positive.

This is how we see it in Argentina, and part of the efforts of the National Commission on Space Activities (CONA) will be channelled in this direction.

Miss LOSTY (United Kingdom): It is the firm belief of my delegation that the will among space nations to share our knowledge and experience is very much in evidence. The United Kingdom is no exception. We contribute, through fellowships and seminars, to the bilateral and multilateral training schemes of the European Space Agency, the British Council, the European Community and the World Bank.

In addition, our Overseas Development Administration (ODA) conducts Government-funded aid programmes which involve the utilization of our space technology in telecommunications and the monitoring and control of agriculture in recipient countries. The ODA's scientific wing, the Natural Resources Institute, has alone produced a list of over 60 different projects in which it is engaged, using remote sensing in countries throughout Africa and in Central America, South America and Indonesia. These projects range from developing a personal-computer-based receiver system to handle environmental satellite data - which is freely available from satellites of the United States National

(Miss Losty, United Kingdom)

Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration - to monitoring desert locusts and assessing rainfall for agriculture.

Another United Kingdom Government body, the Transport Research Laboratory, has used aerial photographs and Landsat satellite images on highway-engineering projects in developing countries. Yet another British institute, the Institute of Hydrology, is engaged in projects using remote sensing in Mexico, Malawi and Niger. In addition, the United Kingdom has bilateral cooperation agreements with the Russian Federation, India and China.

Furthermore, it was an initiative of the British Prime Minister early last year to improve the level of international cooperation in the fields of remote sensing and environmental monitoring through enhancing communication between providers of satellite data, represented by the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS), and users, especially developing countries.

The United Kingdom, which held the CEOS Chair during 1992, was pleased to preside over the plenary session last December at which representatives of United Nations research programmes and of regional user groups provided an initial outline of user requirements in terms of the nature of the satellite data needed and the format in which such data is presented. For the future, users will study how the missions can meet their currently identified requirements. In addition, they will continue to coordinate with each other in order to present a common view of these needs to CEOS.

The CEOS plenary also expanded on the 1991 set of principles for the exchange of satellite data for the purpose of global environmental research. The new set of principles embraces agencies and nations without space programmes, but which can none the less contribute to and benefit from access to satellite data.

(Miss Losty, United Kingdom)

Furthermore, the plenary developed the idea of pooled data being made available to all scientists as a means of reducing the cost of satellite data made available by commercial missions. Finally, the United States announced at the CEOS plenary its Remote Sensing Act, which is aimed at making all data available without any attempt to recover the cost of the mission.

This list mentions only a few examples of the work carried out by the United Kingdom with developing countries, using our knowledge and experience in space science. It is meant merely to give a flavour of the wide range and variety of projects in which we are engaged and the level of cooperation already taking place.

However, we are not saying that the existing arrangements for voluntary cooperation are perfect. There may be deficiencies as well as duplication in the current programmes. But we believe it is surely more worthwhile to try and identify these possible areas of deficiency and duplication - and seek to remedy them, where possible - than to spend time considering possible legal solutions which, in the end, could hinder rather than help cooperation in outer space.

Mr. CHANDRASEKHAR (India): Our delegation would like to make a few brief remarks on recent progress in deriving the benefits of the spin-off applications of the space effort in India, and also touch upon a few pertinent matters relating to this agenda item. We thank the representative of Argentina, who was kind enough to highlight a few examples of the Indian approach.

The Indian space programme's drive to promote the participation of national industries in the space projects and their applications have continued through the already instituted programme for Technology Transfer and Industry Cooperation. Last year the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) additionally transferred 24 new product- or process-related technologies in various national industries. These included several items that could promote space applications as well. Typical examples of these items include communications equipment, high-efficiency image analysis systems, optical sensors, like polarization sensors and charge-coupled-device-based cameras, geographic information system software packages, structural analysis software and a few chemicals for adhesive and cleaning applications.

The overall number of technologies transferred to Indian industries is now over 200 and this programme has proved to be highly encouraging in terms of its high success rate. As in the past, the Indian space programme also sponsored several market survey and system studies to identify and assess the best potential candidates for technology transfer and spin-off applications among the new developments.

Also several new processes developed through space projects have been processed for patenting. A wide spectrum of other promotional activities has also been ensured in terms of the dissemination of technology information to increase awareness of the availability of technologies. ISRO also organized

(Mr. Chandrasekhar, India)

several seminars and meetings with industries on different product disciplines. Several hundred industries have been beneficiaries of this process. In order to promote competitive and specialized commercial services in the area of peaceful space technology applications, a company called ANTRIX Corporation has also been established. This entity promotes and services the space applications oriented services, products and technologies available from Indian space centres for users in India and abroad.

Our delegation considers that the promotion of spin-off applications of space activities is an important goal, and we should consider greater steps to promote international cooperation in this area. We are happy to note that several delegations have been exchanging information on recent developments and also providing details of the opportunities available for the benefit of other countries. This needs to be encouraged, and further measures should be contemplated to provide the benefits of spin-off from space, particularly in many developing countries. We reiterate our appeal that the space applications Programme of the United Nations should organize a dedicated seminar and possibly an exhibition to increase awareness in developing countries and also to promote the exchange of information and technologies.

There is another important aspect related to outer space efforts: there is not enough public awareness all over the globe of the extent of the benefits that space could provide to improve the daily life of the inhabitants. A few programmes initiated in the context of International Space Year to increase public awareness and public education and the World Space Congress were good initiatives in the recent past. However, these efforts have to be continued and must grow. We also recall the Committee's urge to the space agencies to allocate a portion of their budget, albeit small, to

(Mr. Chandrasekhar, India)

promote spin-off applications in developing countries. This would be a fitting gesture to increase awareness and to encourage new efforts by the beneficiaries.

I should now like to say a few words about the Committee's role in implementing the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. We have gone through the report (A/AC.105/547) on the subject produced by the Office for Outer Space Affairs. The report, dated 7 May 1993, highlights several areas of applications of space technology in the context of the recommendations made at the Rio Conference. For example, with respect to Agenda 21 and space technology, the report brings out in detail the various areas of applications: the protection of the atmosphere; integrated planning and management of land resources; combating deforestation; combating desertification and drought; sustainable agriculture and rural development; protection of oceans, coastal areas and marine resources; protection, development and management of freshwater resources; and science for sustainable development.

The report also highlights the Committee's role in several ways - for example, promoting, through the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, training courses, workshops and seminars; fellowships for advanced education; technical advisory services; and so on. It also highlights the role in terms of participation in promoting the International Space Information Service; coordinating environmental space activities; promoting policy-making for the space environment; bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation; and so on.

We also recall that space has played a considerable role in bringing about public awareness of the environment. Through the International Space Year - specifically Mission to Planet Earth, the geosphere-biosphere programme

(Mr. Chandrasekhar, India)

and the efforts of the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites - space technology brought about global awareness of the subject of the environment. In this context, the report produced for the Committee to consider on the Committee's role in the context of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development is extremely important. Our delegation urges the Committee to recommend to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee that the report and the suggestions it contains should be discussed in detail and that the Subcommittee should propose follow-up action on the subject.

Mr. HODGKINS (United States of America): I wish first to call to the Committee's attention the fact that we have in the Chamber copies of the latest edition of "Spinoff 1992" for the information of Member States represented here.

Secondly, my delegation would like to express its view on the importance of the agenda item we are considering, "Spin-off benefits of space technology". It was put on the agenda several years ago, and we believe that there has been a very successful and informative discussion over the years, because this item is a concrete demonstration of how the secondary applications of space technology can contribute to economic growth and improve the quality of life for the general public around the world.

(Mr. Hodgkins, United States)

We believe that this is a very important aspect of what this Committee is doing and we are very gratified to see the number of delegations that have been actively participating over the years in this discussion.

As you mentioned, Mr. Chairman, we have with us today Mr. Len Ault, who is the Deputy Director of the Technology Transfer Division at the headquarters of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration of the United States (NASA). Mr. Ault will be giving us a presentation on some of the latest developments in the area we call "spin-offs".

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mr. Ault to make his presentation.

Mr. Ault (National Aeronautics and Space Administration of the United States) made a presentation to the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: We have thus concluded our consideration of agenda item 8, "Spin-off benefits of space technology: review of current status".

OTHER MATTERS

Mr. DAMICO (Brazil): Although usually relegated to the role of an item where routine topics are settled, the last item on our agenda is seeing its importance renewed, as a number of difficult questions are scheduled to be taken up under its heading. Fortunately, although these topics are difficult they are not impossible to deal with. I am sure that, with a flexible approach on the part of all delegations, workable agreements will be forthcoming. My delegation stands ready to participate in informal consultations with a view to working out compromises.

From the beginning, my delegation took note with interest of the very useful and informative document prepared by the Secretariat on the role of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in implementing the decisions and recommendations reached in Rio de Janeiro during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (A/AC.105/547). As the host country of that important conference, it is only natural for Brazil to be fully committed to the follow-up to that Conference and to the implementation of what was called "the spirit of Rio".

What particularly stands out in that document is the fact that, although environmentally related COPUOS activities are neither new nor unprecedented, this is a field that will demand increased attention from the Committee and most probably will require us to devise a whole new set of objectives and of instruments to achieve them. In this respect, we can only concur with the valid point made by the delegation of India during the general exchange of views that the question of using space technology for sustainable development

(Mr. Damico, Brazil)

on a planetary scale should be tackled within the framework of an international conference.

This observation brings us to the question of the possible convening of a third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE 3). As we understand from the informal consultations held last week and again yesterday under the chairmanship of the Rapporteur, certain delegations prefer to adopt a minimalist approach, stating that it is up to the proponents of the conference to convince those who have certain misgivings about the usefulness of their proposal. We feel that, on the contrary, we should work together with a view to reaching a common understanding on a meaningful proposal that can bring together those in favour of convening UNISPACE 3 with those who consider that we would be better served if we adopted alternative approaches, such as holding discussions within the framework of the Committee. In reality, both parties share a common understanding that enhanced discussions are required.

Therefore, what we must do is decide which forum is best suited to more sustained and action-oriented discussions. As we mentioned earlier, in the view of my delegation, a third UNISPACE conference would seem to play the necessary catalytic role and also to possess the additional advantage of displaying unequivocally the political commitment of the international community. This notwithstanding, we will carefully analyse the constructive views of other delegations on this matter.

Another issue that seems to give rise to strong views is the question of the venues of the meetings of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and its Subcommittees. As the matter stands, on the one hand there is no doubt that the "Headquarters Rule", as contained in General

(Mr. Damico, Brazil)

Assembly resolution 40/243, is fully applicable to the venues of the meetings of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and of COPUOS itself. On the other hand, a decision must first be taken whether the Committee will retain the exception granted by resolution 40/243 to the Legal Subcommittee. Furthermore, after that decision is taken, we should then determine at which United Nations headquarters these meetings will take place. My delegation is prepared to discuss the implication of the choices put before COPUOS in order to reach a consensus agreement, so as to take the opportunity given by resolution 47/212 B and decide during the thirty-sixth session of the Committee on matters under its purview.

Finally, we come to the delicate question of the enlargement of the Committee. My delegation welcomes the applications submitted to the Committee, as they demonstrate the high regard in which Member States hold our deliberations. My delegation feels that this enlargement should, in principle, be commensurate with the principle of equality of geographical distribution, as this balance has been retained in the Committee for many years. It seems quite logical that this principle should be applied consistently. We look forward to expeditiously reaching consensus in this respect.

Mr. DIRAN (Indonesia): I should like to say a few words on the subject matter described in the report of the Secretariat on the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (A/AC.105/547), which we have before us, and which has been mentioned and emphasized by the representatives of India and Brazil as well.

My delegation would like to note the importance of global efforts in preserving our precious and fragile environment. Our next 25-year national long-range development programme strategy takes an integrated approach to

(Mr. Diran, Indonesia)

sustainable development. This is intended as an integrated approach to developing our country while maintaining a harmonious balance between progress, growth and development as well as an ecology that makes this possible.

We therefore would like the global problem of environment and development to be discussed as a priority item during the next session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee in order to identify and define the role of space in this matter.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. JASENTULIYANA (Chief, Office for Outer Space Affairs): In response to requests from some Member States relating to the implications of the decisions of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General concerning the relocation of the Office for Outer Space Affairs to Vienna, I have been authorized by the Office of the Secretary-General to provide the following information to the Committee.

Last month the General Assembly adopted resolution 47/212 B, approving the proposals of the Secretary-General for the restructuring of the Secretariat, including the relocation of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, with its multisectoral programme of political, legal, technological and technical-assistance activities, to the United Nations Office at Vienna. As a result of that restructuring and the decision of the Secretary-General, the Office will be responsible for providing meeting services for the Committee, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Legal Subcommittee, and for their subsidiary bodies.

I would further like to inform the Committee that, while no firm date has yet been set for the relocation of the Office for Outer Space Affairs to Vienna, the move is anticipated to have taken place by the end of September. Therefore, in accordance with the headquarters rule established by the General Assembly, the Committee and the Subcommittees and their subsidiary bodies would meet in Vienna unless the General Assembly decides to make an exception. We have been informed that the conference servicing requirements for the Committee and its subsidiary bodies can be met from existing resources of the regular budget for conference services in Vienna.

If an exception to the headquarters rule is made for the Legal Subcommittee, while general conference servicing requirements could be met from existing resources of the regular budget in New York or Geneva, there

(Mr. Jasentuliyana)

would be additional costs for secretariat travel from Vienna and for per diem allowances. According to the Office of the Controller, while budget decisions are in the hands of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the Fifth Committee, for the information of the Committee, the cost estimates for travel and per diem allowances for five Professional and General Service staff members of the Office for Outer Space Affairs based in Vienna would be $18,500 for a three-week meeting in Geneva and $32,500 for a three-week meeting in New York.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.

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COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 390th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 16 June 1993, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. HOHENFELLNER (Austria)

- Other matters (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

OTHER MATTERS (continued)

The CHAIRMAN: I very much regret that, although I was punctual, we could not start this meeting punctually. But that is not my responsibility.

Mr. REY (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): I wish to apologize to the Chairman and other members of the Committee for delaying the start of the meeting. The truth is that I did not expect to be the first speaker, though I shall be pleased to make the first statement.

On behalf of the Group of 77, over which my country is honoured to preside, I should like to make a few points concerning the three items the Committee is currently considering with a view to defining and taking a decision on them. In my previous statement, I had occasion to describe the position of the Group of 77 on the holding of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE 3). I explained, that the Group of 77 was aware that the convening of such a Conference required a clear and detailed definition of the Conference's purposes and objectives, and I expressed the Group's willingness to participate actively in efforts to that end. As to the Conference's venue and calendar, I believe that proposals were made in the informal Working Group. For its part, the Group of 77 is flexible on the matter. The delegation of Colombia welcomes the transfer of the headquarters of the Office for Outer Space Affairs to Vienna: a great deal of research in the field of space science technology has been carried out in Austria, which hosted such conferences as UNISPACE 82 and meetings of the outer space Committee in 1991. It was my personal honour to attend those conferences and to avail myself of the many facilities that the Austrian Government has to offer in that regard.

(Mr. Rey, Colombia)

I believe that the members of the Group of 77 share this view. However, despite its favourable view of the activities of the Office for Outer Space Affairs in Vienna, and although the Group of 77 sees no difficulty in holding meetings of the Committee and the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee in Vienna, there would be problems if we were to hold meetings of the Legal Subcommittee there - not because its meetings are inherently different from the others but because, as the Group of 77 has observed, in general, the convening of conferences away from New York can create certain difficulities.

For one thing, they arise from some Committee members' lack of diplomatic representation in Vienna. For example, seven of the 11 African countries have no diplomatic representation in Vienna; neither does one of the Asian countries.

(Mr. Rey, Colombia)

In other words, eight countries out of a total of 31 - 25 per cent - have no representation in Vienna.

The Group of 77 wished to put this concern to the Subcommittee so that the possibility of other approaches to helping these countries could be explored. Such approaches would consist basically in continuing to support the current arrangement, which is to alternate the venue of meetings of the Committee between Europe-Geneva - and New York, it being understood that the European venue would henceforth be Vienna.

I speak now on behalf of Latin American members of the Committee, in connection with the request of a certain Asian country to become a member. Our countries, and my country in particular, favour increasing the membership of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. We have absolutely no objection to the participation of any country; quite the contary, we feel that broader participation is always welcome.

However, the countries of Latin America, including Colombia, respect the right of each regional group to select its own representatives. We therefore have no objection to an increase in the membership of a particular regional group, provided that the representation of the other regional groups is increased proportionally. Any other arrangement would be totally unacceptable to us.

Mr. ORDZHONIKIDZE (Russian Federation) (interpretation from Russian): If I have understood correctly, we are now discussing the agenda item "Other matters". I shall be speaking on behalf of the Russian Federation alone, so this statement will be somewhat shorter than the preceding one.

During this session of the Committee, there has emerged broad agreement on the merits of enlarging its membership. Indeed, throughout the informal consulations on this issue, my delegation took the position that if the

(Mr. Ordzhonikidze, Russian Federation)

Committee is to deal effectively with outer space matters it must include those States that can make a genuine contribution to outer space activities and that can share with the United Nations their experience, developments and programmes. We took it as our premise that this question could be agreed on and resolved; the Committee's prestige could not but benefit as a result.

Unfortunately, at the last moment, for reasons we fail to understand, a numerical consideration has been raised - even though, in outer space matters, quantity does not always correspond to quality. It seems to us that we should be thinking in terms of filling the Committee not with representatives of particular regions but with representatives of States with experience in space activities - States that are capable of making a genuine contribution to the Committee's activities. That is the peculiarity of this particular United Nations body; we would not, of course, want to see more empty seats in the chamber, because the Committee's prestige would then plummet.

We earnestly appeal to the representatives of the Group of 77 not to upset at the last minute the consensus that had emerged, the more so as their numerically-based approach is incomprehensible to us.

Under the item "Other matters" we are also considering the question of a future United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE 3). In this connection, we have serious doubts concerning the wording in the informal paper that we received to the effect that the Committee has considered the various aspects of the conference in detail.

(Mr. Ordzhonikidze, Russian Federation)

I do not recall such a detailed discussion of various aspects of the conference, and I doubt that we have seriously considered this problem. Of course, certain delegations spoke, one after the other; but no serious discussion took place, and that was for one reason: those who initiated this proposal unfortunately could not explain to us clearly and understandably what it is that they would like the conference to do. What are its objectives? What are its tasks? What would be the specific questions to be considered at the conference? And why is such a conference needed in the first place? Until such time as this has been explained to us clearly, until such time as we are ready to take a decision, my delegation cannot support any wording relating to the conference which implies that the Committee is ready to deal with this question.

The CHAIRMAN: As we are clearly touching on matters that I wanted to deal with in informal consultations, and in order to allow sufficient time for us to discuss these matters very bluntly with a view to reaching a consensus, I would suggest, if Colombia agrees, that we continue discussing these items in the informal consultations which I intend to hold immediately after this meeting. At that time, we shall deal with all these matters as well as those raised by the representatives of Colombia and the Russian Federation.

Mr. REY (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): I have no objection to your suggestion. However, before we begin informal consultations, I must say the following in reply to the statement made by the representative of the Russian Federation.

I do not know what consensus or what agreements he is talking about. The Latin American Group is unaware of anything of the sort. We do not know what

(Mr. Rey, Colombia)

he is referring to, or even what the focus of the problem is. What my delegation said on behalf of the Latin American Group is that we have no objection to the admission of any country, provided that it results in a proportionate increase in the membership of the other regional groups. Why? Because that is what the Charter of the United Nations stipulates. Here, fortunately, if only in principle, there are no first- and second-class countries. We cannot therefore treat countries selectively; that would be to prejudge representatives of other regions incapable of participating effectively in the work of the Committee. That is something that I cannot accept, either on behalf of my delegation or on behalf of the Latin American countries.

I do not know if there is any conflict. I do not know what agreements and consensuses might have been reached earlier. I am simply saying that we are prepared to accept the admission of the country that has requested it, provided that the membership of the other regional groups is also increased. I do not see why this should create any problems. If I am told that an additional Asian country, an additional European country, an additional Latin American country, an additional African country and so on are accepted, fine; there is no problem, no conflict. But perhaps someone who has participated in the discussion of other questions that we are not familiar with knows something that we do not.

The CHAIRMAN: Let me remind delegations that following the adjournment of this meeting, informal consultations restricted to full members will take place.

The meeting rose at 3.45 p.m.

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COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 391st MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 17 June 1993, at 12.25 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. MUNTEANU (Romania)
(Vice-Chairman)

- Other matters (continued)

- Report of the Committee to the General Assembly

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In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Munteanu (Romania), Vice-Chairman, took the chair.

The meeting was called to order at 12.25 p.m.

OTHER MATTERS (continued)

Mr. GONZALEZ BUSTOS (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): Item 8 on the agenda, entitled "Spin-off benefits of space technology: review of current status", is, in the view of my delegation, one of the basic objectives of the Committee. In fact, it is not only a question of identifying the spin-off benefits of space technology, but also, and more importantly, one of designing the necessary mechanisms to allow access by all countries, and principally the developing countries, to those benefits on favourable terms. In that connection, my delegation stresses the need to strengthen international cooperation in the field of space.

Space technology has reached a high level of sophistication because of the economic, social and cultural spin-off of benefits of using it efficiently. Many countries that are today space Powers earmarked enormous human, technical and financial resources over many years in order to reach the level of space development they have today. The developing countries, lacking those resources, have not been able to solve basic problems of communication, and their development in the space field has been quite insignificant. The technological gap facing these countries has been widening day by day, and that is why greater cooperation within the exceptional framework provided by the United Nations is becoming indispensable.

The advances in space technology are capable of being applied effectively to the benefit of countries' economic and social development. They can be applied in very many different ways and extend to a variety of areas, such as

(Mr. Gonzalez Bustos, Mexico)

industry or medicine. Satellite remote sensing, for example, provides valuable assistance in the areas of agriculture, natural-disaster prevention and natural-resource monitoring, to name but a few. The countries that have this technology must also have the political will to promote access to it for the developing countries.

My delegation feels that it is appropriate for the specialized agencies in the United Nations system that participate actively in the various areas of space activities and space technology applications to examine the possibility of setting aside part of their regular budgets to promote the use of the spin-off benefits of space technology in the developing countries.

Under item 9, "Other matters", I should like to refer briefly to the following aspects.

The substantive session of the Commission on Sustainable Development that is now taking place here at Headquarters is sure to develop a series of guidelines on which the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) will have to base its own activities. There are many areas in which the Committee can make valuable contributions, as it has at its disposal the technical and legal elements to enable it to do so.

The implementation of Agenda 21 presupposes collaboration between all United Nations subsidiary bodies; COPUOS cannot and should not remain uninvolved, as the objective being pursued requires all countries alike to act. Indeed, the health of their people and of future generations depends on it. My delegation urges COPUOS to commit itself to the struggle to preserve the environment, in space and on Earth, and to reverse environmental degradation as a part of promoting the economic and social development of peoples.

(Mr. Gonzalez Bustos, Mexico)

In conclusion, my delegation reiterates the need for the Programme on Space Applications to be given greater economic resources. To achieve this, we propose that the Office for Outer Space Affairs prepare a document showing the priority programmes that have not been started or finished for lack of finance and including the amounts that would have been required; on that basis, the Committee should request the Secretary-General to include those amounts in preparing the next budget exercise. We urge all other countries to continue supporting the Programme on Space Applications in order to implement the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. JASENTULIYANA (Secretary of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space): The first part of the draft report of the Committee to the General Assembly (A/AC.105/L.202) was distributed yesterday morning. It includes the "Introduction" and the sections on "Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes" and "Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on the work of its thirtieth session". A number of additional paragraphs, to be included in the first part of the report, are contained in document A/AC.105/L.202/Add.2, now being circulated; these relate to the Santiago Declaration, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and space debris.

The second part of the draft report (A/AC.105/L.202/Add.1) is now being circulated; it covers "Report of the Legal Subcommittee on the work of its thirty-second session".

The third part of the draft report (A/AC.105/L.202/Add.3) is also being circulated now; it covers "Spin-off benefits of space technology: review of current status" and "Future work".

The final part of the draft report, to be circulated by tomorrow morning, will cover "Other matters" and will be based on the informal consultations that have been taking place since yesterday on questions relating to membership, venue and other matters.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.